

A JOINT MEMORIAL

REQUESTING THE CHILDREN, YOUTH AND FAMILIES DEPARTMENT TO CONVENE A WORK GROUP OF URBAN AND RURAL CHILD CARE PROVIDERS, CHILD CARE ADVOCATES AND OTHERS TO REVIEW THE CURRENT PROCEDURES FOR DETERMINING MARKET RATE REIMBURSEMENTS, REVIEW THE FEDERAL REGISTER REQUIREMENTS FOR REIMBURSEMENTS AND MAKE RECOMMENDATIONS TO ENSURE EQUAL ACCESS TO CHILD CARE FOR CHILDREN AND FAIR MARKET REIMBURSEMENT RATES FOR PROVIDERS.

WHEREAS, numerous studies show that quality early child care and education for young children result in improved educational outcomes and future success; and

WHEREAS, adequate child care reimbursement rates that fund well-trained teachers and quality facilities are critical to a system of quality care for infants, toddlers and young people; and

WHEREAS, a system of child care payments that does not reflect the realities of the market makes it economically infeasible for many providers to serve low-income children, who are the neediest children in New Mexico; and

WHEREAS, the children, youth and families department conducts market rate surveys every two years, which should accurately determine the state-subsidized payment rates that are sufficient to ensure equal access to care for all children; and

WHEREAS, significant disparities exist in New Mexico between rural child care provider reimbursement rates and urban child care provider reimbursement rates;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF NEW MEXICO that the children, youth and families department be requested to convene a work group comprised of both urban and rural child care providers, child care advocates and others to study child care reimbursement rates; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the work group be requested to review the procedures currently in place for determining market rate reimbursements, review the federal register requirements for determining market rates and make recommendations on ways to ensure both equal access to child care for children and fair rates for providers; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the work group report its findings to the welfare reform oversight committee and the legislative health and human services committee by December 31, 2002; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this memorial be forwarded to the children, youth and families department and the chairs of the welfare reform oversight committee and the legislative health and human services committee.